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The sequel to the REV. R. LESTER MONDALE's editorial that appeared in our Winter issue and was entitled *The Logic of Lies*, will be published in the Summer issue. The title of the forthcoming editorial will be *Time-Thinking and the Logic of Space*.

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The Basic Faith of Liberal Christians¹

FREDERICK M. ELIOT

At the celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of The University of Chicago, in September, 1941, President Hutchins called the universities of America "mirrors of confusion," a picturesque metaphor that suggests brightly polished surfaces from which the confusion of the public mind is reflected back into the life of the nation unaltered, unfocused, uninterpreted, unjudged. If that opinion is correct, it means that the centers of scholarship and academic learning are today playing a passive role in a period when, in view of the great tradition of past eras, they might have been expected to provide strong and positive leadership.

Dr. Hutchins' severe word with regard to the great universities is confirmed, and extended to a wider range, by the formal statement issued by the third annual Conference on Science, Philosophy, and Religion, after its five day session this last summer at Columbia University. The statement is a frank avowal that American scholarship, as represented by a large body of distinguished students in a wide variety of fields, is today incapable of providing constructive leadership in a period of "intellectual confusion and spiritual and moral deterioration." Commenting on the statement, Professor Lyman Bryson said, "The scholars mean they intend to do a job of co-operative thinking which they have not been doing;" and Professor Overstreet stated his views thus: "We are asking, How can masses of human beings learn to work together generously and constructively? If we can develop a technique for doing that among ourselves as scientists, philosophers, and theologians, we might be able to show the world how to use it."

For one outside the academic world, and with no claim to scholar-

¹Delivered as *The Russell Lecture* at Tufts College, Medford, Mass., on October 25, 1942.

ship, the impression is difficult to avoid that this Conference, from which much had been expected, found itself bewildered, and very nearly helpless to deal with a situation that has got pretty thoroughly "out of hand."

Here and there, to be sure, some scholar of distinction has spoken out, with a note of authority in his voice to which the general public has listened and given heed. I do not wish to disparage the power and courage which these exceptional scholars have shown; but it is of more importance to note that they are exceptional and not typical. For positive leadership the American people, in their effort to bring order into their thinking and unity of purpose into their lives under the threat of the present crisis, have had to rely almost wholly upon their political leaders; and the fact that this leadership has been competent and idealistic only serves to make more marked the contrast with the passive role of the scholars.

If this picture of the lack of leadership from the universities, in a realm where they might have been expected to clarify and instruct rather than to mirror the confusion of the nation's thinking, is lamentable, how much more so is the lack of such leadership from the churches! In a time when strong leadership in the field of moral and spiritual values is desperately needed, the voices from the churches of America are pitifully few and feeble. We have no Faulhaber nor Niemoeller, and nobody in American life speaks with anything like the authority of William Temple. There has been some talk about an "American Malvern," but the conference last year at Delaware, Ohio, was only a pale and imitative affair. The series of articles in *Fortune* is the best thing we have as yet produced in the way of a statement of the place of religious faith in the present crisis; and it is, I am afraid, altogether too significant that these papers should have appeared in a magazine that the vast majority of Americans regard as the mouthpiece of great wealth and successful business. No church, as such, speaking in its own name and by its own authority, has yet said anything that has been heard beyond its own membership or carried any weight in creating national unity. The trumpets, when they have been sounded at all, have failed to give forth a clear note of positive and commanding force.

Some churchmen are content that this should be the case, on the theory that it is the business of the church to minister to human misery and to hold itself aloof from the conflicts that tear mankind

and shatter civilizations. These are they who hold that the sufficient program of pure religion is "to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world." Then, too, there are those who regard the church as the custodian of a sacred flame that cannot be preserved through dark ages unless it is carried into the catacombs for the duration. Both groups, though ably represented among us today, are out of touch with the deeper currents of American life, for both, in their attitude and outlook, represent the weariness of age in a land of which it is still true that "dawn is on her forehead still." They are like the hero of Nevil Shute's story, "The Pied Piper." John Sidney Howard is an appealing and touching figure—eager to find some way to help, but useless for the main business in hand. The delightful company of children whom he rescues, with great personal courage, from Nazi-occupied France, is symbolic of all the vast work of mercy that someone must do in the name of pity. But suppose he had been thirty instead of seventy! Then he would have been about the real job that needed to be done! There was a time when the catacombs were the glory of a church that was bent on overturning the world, but today they are like the Pied Piper's London club—a refuge from unreasonable and outrageous risks.

Now some of us cannot bring ourselves to admit that either John Sidney Howard or his club is a satisfactory symbol for the church. We cannot believe that the world today is wholly unsusceptible to the influence of religion, or that the business of the churches is to retreat underground and somehow contrive to nurse a tiny flame of celestial fire against the time when once again it may be brought forth and placed upon the altars that now stand empty and desolate. We are convinced that religion is not only needed now but that it is potentially the decisive factor in the outcome of the present struggle. We are convinced that the churches could make themselves not merely useful in an emergency but once again the chief agencies of spiritual instruction and leadership.

Measured by the calendar, the church is old, but she is also young—far too young to rationalize her inadequacy to the world's present necessities. Today's paramount need is not pity, nor the works of pity, but light and leadership—the need for light upon dark and obstructed roads, for clean-cut moral judgments in the face of ruthless and cynical power, for courage to attack the hosts of spiritual

wickedness in high places, for skill to plan campaigns against strongholds of evil, to outwit the wiles of the devil, to build an ordered and an orderly world. For these we need faith, the kind of faith that brought down the walls of Jericho, that stopped the mouths of lions, that subdued kingdoms, and wrought righteousness; the kind of faith that does not retreat from evil, that does not submit to evil, but resists, and overthrows, and then creates, and builds. The main business of the churches is to teach men and women to hold and to apply such faith in the world of today. The word which the churches should be giving to the people is the ancient word of Isaiah, "Make straight in the desert a highway for our God."

That word assumes that the highway can be built, and it also assumes that, with God's help, it can be built by human hands, human brains, and human courage. There is no use in telling people to build unless they share these basic assumptions, and the chief source of bewilderment among religious men and women today is that they have no clear convictions at this point.

Many voices have been telling them that it cannot be done, others that they at any rate cannot do it, and still others that it really isn't worth doing anyway, until the foundations of self-confidence have been badly shaken; and there has been no clear, unequivocal voice from the churches that bear the name of Jesus Christ, to steady and confirm their wavering faith. On the contrary, the most powerful voices speaking on behalf of Christianity today deny such faith altogether. This failure on the part of the Christian churches to proclaim in confident and persuasive tones a basic faith in man is, I believe, the reason for their failure to provide effective leadership in the confusion of thought and purpose in our time.

It is still true that the teaching of the great majority of Christian churches gives central importance to the doctrine that man is incapable of solving the major problem which life presents to him, and that the essential first step is for him to confess this inability and throw himself upon the mercy of God. Just when and how this doctrine first was injected into the blood-stream of Christian thought, and how it became so strong as to dominate practically all Christian thinking and practice until the modern age, I do not now propose to set forth; but I want to register my opinion that it was not a part of the teachings of Jesus nor of the primitive Christian tradition. It is an addition from outside, not an excrement

from within. It is foreign to the spiritual heritage which Jesus of Nazareth received and to the legacy of spiritual power which he bequeathed to his disciples. From time to time, through the centuries since he lived and taught, this alien doctrine has been revived and renewed in strength, as it has made its appeal to a long succession of devout and gifted theologians, from St. Augustine to Reinhold Niebuhr. That it can lay hold upon men of great intellectual and spiritual power, there can be no question; but church historians have yet to give us a thorough-going account of the effect it has had upon the course of human events.

Naturally enough, this doctrine, which is at heart a gospel of pessimism and despair, has developed fresh vigor in periods of turmoil and disaster. When the building of the highway through the desert has become so difficult that human patience and courage have been stretched to the breaking point, it is easy to understand why men have turned to a teaching that told them the enterprise was impossible anyway, that placed the major responsibility somewhere else, and laid upon their shoulders the comparatively simple obligation to trust God for the outcome while obeying his instructions, day by day, as laid down in his name by his official representatives.

There is, therefore, no reason to be surprised that in the period beginning with the outbreak of the First World War there should have come a renaissance of this doctrine throughout Christendom, or that under the stress of successive phases of worldwide conflict it should have developed in a particularly virulent form. That, at any rate, is just what has happened.

Let me take a recent example. In the *Atlantic Monthly* for September there is an article by Bernard Iddings Bell, entitled, "Will the Christian Church Survive?" The very words of the title betray the mood of the writer; and one cannot refrain from asking, is this a time for one who offers himself as a popular guide and teacher in matters of Christian faith to raise the banner of doubt as to the survival of the institution he is sworn to serve? It is as though a colonel on the staff of General MacArthur were to write an article for the *Saturday Evening Post* under the title, "Will the United States of America Survive?" Undoubtedly, some people would admire his nerve, but the overwhelming majority of Americans would resent the flaunting of his lack of faith. Responsible leaders have, inescapably, their moments of dark and heart-breaking doubt; but unless their

basic faith has been shattered they do not publicly proclaim their uncertainty, for they feel (or ought to feel) that at such times they are under bonds to refrain their lips from speaking.

When we pass from the title to the body of Canon Bell's article, we find no change of mood. As he studies the various plans for making a better world after the war, he detects in all of them a unanimous assumption that man is "morally competent, of sufficient natural good-will to make his system—whatever it may be—minister to something more satisfactory than a frequently renewed fratricidal conflict," "able to handle his affairs without redemption from an ingrained folly," having it within his power to "rise above self-seeking and live in a voluntary sociality." This assumption Dr. Bell regards as the chief contribution of liberalism to the modern world, and he rejects it as totally untrue. Because this "trust in rational idealism," which ignores "man's conceited irrationality," has dominated "the liberal age," he looks upon the modern epoch as a "day whose sun is sinking into a confusing twilight."

Over against all this, Dr. Bell sets the challenge and opposition of what he considers the true teaching of Christianity. "Against this common assumption . . . the teaching of Jesus Christ stands in unqualified opposition; nor can the Christian Church compromise in respect to that opposition without ceasing to be Christian." If the assumption of the liberal, which it seems to me Dr. Bell either fails to understand or else deliberately caricatures, is valid, then, he tells us, "Christianity is irrelevant to life. In that case the Church is at worst an incubus which ought to be destroyed and from which innocent children should be protected, at best an ivory tower in which peculiar and incompetent people may from time to time be permitted to take refuge from reality—an institution insignificant but relatively harmless."

I do not propose to analyze in detail the article by Dr. Bell. What concerns me now is its tone and temper. In substance, what Dr. Bell is saying is that if he understands the nature of contemporary idealism, Christianity is uncompromisingly opposed to it; and that if the Christian Church is not ready to take this position of open and active opposition to the whole modern effort to create a better world, then it will become irrelevant and insignificant. He has no faith in the modern age, no faith in contemporary idealism, no faith in the living generation unless it can be converted from any real faith in itself.

To that I would reply that so long as Christianity remains a religion with no real faith in the living generation it will continue to seem irrelevant and insignificant to the very people who might make it once again a living and conquering force. The modern world, with all its faults and failures, wants to believe in itself and in its ability to make this world slowly but steadily better. That faith was born again in the eighteenth century, tested out against many problems in the nineteenth, and now faces a supreme opportunity in the twentieth. Those who share it have no illusions as to the price that will have to be paid, the terrible armies that will have to be defeated, or the desperate need for spiritual fortification of their courage, if the job is to be done; but it seems clear to me that any teacher or preacher, any theology or church, will be set aside as meaningless, whose word to the fighters in the ranks is "It can't be done."

If Christianity is to provide positive and effective leadership today, it must have as its central core a basic faith in the capacity of man to deal adequately with the problems, personal and social, that today confront him, no matter how difficult of solution they may seem; and it is the liberal Christian who is committed to this basic proposition believing that human reason and human good-will can transform the world. He holds that this faith was central in the religion of Jesus, and that discipleship is primarily the process of building this faith into human lives and human society. He has an unshakable confidence in man's power to see the right and to do it. He rejects every suggestion that man is so tainted by original sin, or by any ingrained and inescapable depravity, that he cannot lay hold upon the truth and make it the controlling factor in his individual conduct and his relations with his fellowmen. This positive faith in man is fundamental, and on that basic conviction the liberal Christian will not and cannot waver.

From the camp of the adversary, the liberal Christian will be promptly and vigorously challenged with the assertion that he is naively optimistic and that he greatly over-simplifies the whole problem, especially when he ventures to apply his faith to the entire human race and the present appalling condition of world chaos and anarchy. For example, writing not as a theologian but a student of international politics in the University College of Wales, Professor E. H. Carr recently paid his respects to the liberals in these words: "There is a kind of naive arrogance in the assumption that the prob-

lem of the government of mankind, which has defied human wit and human experience for centuries, can be solved out of hand by some neat paper construction of a few simple-minded enthusiasts," and he goes on to say that people of this sort "exercise a pernicious influence by grossly over-simplifying the problem and by obscuring the need to study with patience and humility the historical perspective and the economic organization of the world for which they prescribe." And Professor Niebuhr defines "the error that underlies all the optimistic illusions of our culture as a too-simple confidence in man, particularly in rational man, and a too-simple hope in the progressive achievement of virtue in history, by reason of the progressive extension of intelligence." In his eyes the liberal Christian is "an inveterate utopian"; and when he turns to the problem of world order, he consistently waves aside all basic faith of the liberal kind. "We must, for instance," he says, "achieve a higher level of international organization after the war or our civilization will sink even lower. If we engage in the task of world reconstruction without a disavowal of the utopian illusion, which has informed our culture particularly since the eighteenth century, we shall ask for the impossible by way of world federation or some world superstate"; to which he adds the obviously consistent finale, "we shall not get it."

Now all this talk about simple-minded and naive optimism strikes me as singularly indicative of the lack of faith that prompts most of the critics of liberal Christianity today. What's wrong with us is that we have refused to admit that our present failures are irretrievable and that we have refused to limit our hopes by the perfectly obvious fact that they will not be achieved in our lifetime! What's wrong with us is that we still believe in the basic assumption of Isaiah that "the crooked shall be made straight" and the basic assumption of Jesus that even a pretty sick man can "take up his bed and walk"! In a single phrase, we have too much faith.

The cure for that lamentable condition, so our critics would have us believe, is to give up all faith in man as capable of discovering the right way to go and proceeding in that direction by the exercise of his own powers of mind, heart, and will. To hold the liberal faith, Dr. Niebuhr tells us, is to reveal that we are "incredibly credulous," for "human achievement contains a tragic element of frustration and corruption and will contain it to the end of history." Well, when that day arrives, the record may show that Dr. Niebuhr was right in

his confident prediction of gloom, but I trust the record will also show that at least a few naive and simple-minded optimists still stubbornly held to the faith that the only reason why their ideals had not been achieved was that they needed a little more time.

The present fashion in academic circles of decrying positive faith in man as "simple-minded" seems to me pretty thoroughly beside the point. It is as though the sophisticated world rejected as over-simple the statement of Jesus, "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free," because forsooth every one of the dozen words it contains is a monosyllable! Since when has it been true that an idea is false because it is simple? The cult of complexity, with its self-appointed hierarchy of priestly devotees of the obscure, is far more dangerous to straight thinking and effective action than all the naive utopianism in the world. Of course, what is wanted is neither utopianism nor pessimism, but—to paraphrase a sentence written many years ago by Sir Edward Grey—an idealism that correctly estimates the limits of what is possible in one generation.

What is wanted is an idealism, grounded in positive faith in man, that will accurately assess all the practical difficulties before us, seek out the right answer to each of them by the use of plain reason, develop the necessary skills to put that answer into effect, and then set to work with "calm, undaunted will" to achieve what can and should be done. The temper of such idealism is neither romantic nor naive. It is Victorian, if you like; prosaic rather than fanciful; but I am inclined to think that it accomplishes more than any other variety of human effort. You may recall Walter Bagehot's description of the Whigs, which comes close to describing the sort of idealism I have in mind. "Perhaps as long as there has been a political history in this country there have been certain men of a cool, moderate, resolute firmness, not gifted with high imagination, little prone to enthusiastic sentiment, heedless of large theories and speculations, careless of dreamy skepticism, with a clear view of the next step, and a wise intention to take it; a strong conviction that the elements of knowledge are true, and a steady belief that the present world can, and should, be quietly improved."

The faith behind that sort of strong conviction and steady belief is the basic faith of the liberal. When he finds in the spirit of Jesus the inspiration to maintain it and live for it, he is a liberal Christian. It may seem simple, naive, unduly optimistic; but it is the faith that

will continue quietly and competently to improve the present world, and it will not be diverted from its cool, moderate, resolute firmness by any modern form of the ancient doctrine of other-worldly, fatalistic pessimism, nor by any fantastic, illusory confidence in magic formulas and short-cuts. The liberal has no more use for complacency, or for the notion that "history is itself a kind of process of redemption," or for an "impossible heaven on earth," or for an "easy escape from tragedy," than has Professor Niebuhr. He shares with that distinguished and redoubtable critic his contempt for self-deception and smugness and weak-minded avoidance of real difficulties. A faith that produced merely a kind of middle-class, self-satisfied, comfortable reliance upon an automatic progress of mankind onward and upward forever would be a horrible caricature of liberal Christianity, and every liberal Christian should acknowledge with gratitude his debt to Professor Niebuhr for once again sharply reminding him of the awful peril that besets him in the form of this temptation.

Nor was the warning unjustified at this time. The story of liberal Christianity in America has its bright and memorable pages, but I do not see how anyone who tries to see the picture with some sense of perspective and proportion can help coming to the conclusion that the total influence of liberal Christianity in this country has been lamentably small, both directly and indirectly, especially in view of the extraordinary opportunity and promise with which the story opens. There are many reasons that account for this, I suppose, and it isn't likely that any one reason may safely be assigned as the chief cause; but if I were to attempt to do so, I should say that our comparative failure to achieve the position of leadership to which we privately think our faith should entitle us is chiefly due to the fact that we have, as an organized religious movement, consistently gone on the theory that what is good will inevitably and almost automatically win its own way. We have believed that Emerson was right and we have relied upon the mouse-trap philosophy as sound. "If a man can write a better book, preach a better sermon, or make a better mouse-trap than his neighbor, though he build his house in the woods, the world will make a beaten path to his door." But experience ought long ago to have shown us that this famous statement just isn't true. Because liberal Christians have assumed that it is true, the world has gone blithely on its way without being in any substantial degree influenced by us. It was indeed a simple-minded, naive, over-optimis-

tic, and wholly unjustified assumption. That liberal churches have survived at all is clear evidence that the basic faith on which they are founded cannot easily be smothered by smugness or destroyed by careless indifference.

It is, I believe, this reliance upon a false premise that accounts for our unwillingness to take the trouble and make the sacrifices necessary for an effective church organization. We have consoled ourselves by thinking that the lack of a good working organization is proof that we are free of the taint of sectarianism, that our weakness is evidence of our fidelity to values that in other churches have been crowded out by "mere machinery," that one with God is a majority whereas a million with God would be instantly and properly suspected. We've been lazy, too, of course; but I think the real root of the matter is not indolence but a too ready acceptance of a half-understood theory that fitted very comfortably into our natural reluctance to become fighting and flaming champions of our liberal faith.

This is certainly included in the indictment of liberals which Dr. Niebuhr so cogently draws up, though he includes other charges that are by no means so well substantiated. But on this count he is right, and, indeed, doesn't carry it far enough. We liberals have too much and too often taken it for granted that progress will happen of itself, or at most with a sort of tepid approbation from a few highly intelligent and superior souls. We have not faced as a real and dangerous possibility the final defeat of truth and the complete destruction of liberty and justice. The curve of human progress as we have plotted it has had its ups and downs, but the general trend has been in the right direction. It just hasn't occurred to us that it might take a deep final dip down.

That is why we have not been excited about our faith and militant in its defense and propagation. That is why we have been so timid about making clean-cut moral judgments and proclaiming them. That is why we have let tolerance become a major virtue, outranking in our practical scale of values both honesty and the almost forgotten virtue of being right (not merely right-intentioned) in our opinions. We have exalted sincerity, which on any sensible ethical scale ought to be very near the bottom, to a place of supreme importance, with disastrous results. There is a passage in John Locke's *On Human Understanding* which liberals ought to read and ponder with the

most soul-searching care. It runs thus: "We should contend earnestly for the truth, but we should first be sure that it is the truth, or else we fight against God, who is the God of truth, and do the work of the devil, who is the father of lies; and our zeal, though ever so warm, will not excuse us. . . ." For "zeal" substitute the word "sincerity" or the word "tolerance," and the proposition remains true.

It is not enough for liberals to be sincere, or tolerant; they must also be thoroughly convinced that they are right—so convinced of it that they will not hesitate to fight for what they believe to be true, knowing all the time that if they are not right their zeal will be no excuse. That is hard doctrine, but for want of it liberal Christians have failed to achieve the position of leadership in the modern world.

When you come right down to it, there are only two kinds of basic faith, the kind that says "It can't be done" and the kind that says "It can." By basic faith I mean the underlying set of convictions which actually determine a man's conduct when he faces a situation that presents real and perhaps even apparently insuperable difficulties in the way of his getting or doing what he very much wants because he believes it is really worth getting or doing. I use the word "convictions" because it comes nearer than any other word I know to suggesting the combination of opinions, loyalties, and purposes which at any given moment constitute the compelling power within a man's self. The intent of the word "basic" is to indicate that the faith I have in mind comes into play most clearly when all other resources have failed, when a man is at the end of his tether. It was his basic faith that determined what Oakes would do when he realized that his staying with Captain Scott would serve only to increase the chances that everyone in the little party would be lost, just as it was their basic faith that compelled Scott and the others to stick it out to the end.

The basic faith of a liberal is that which says, under any combination of adverse circumstances, "This thing which I have failed to do thus far is not impossible, because it is the kind of thing that ought to be done. I have failed, not because I have been trying to do what can't be done, but because I haven't yet learned how to do it. It's my ignorance, or my stupidity, or my lack of patience, or my unwillingness to see it through, that accounts for my failure. And now I shall try it again with more determination. Next time, or the time

after that, I shall succeed. Or, if I die before I can do it, someone wiser, more skilful, with more stoutness of heart, will succeed. It's really worth doing, and it shall be done! The crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain. No matter how many times I fail, I will not surrender that faith."

Last March there appeared a volume of speeches by Field-Marshal the Right Honourable J. C. Smuts, the seventy-two year old veteran of many wars, soldier, statesman, mountaineer, philosopher, naturalist, whose indomitable faith and courage are today as powerful in the world as a quarter of a century ago. The little book carries a gallant title: *Plans for a Better World*. That tells the whole story. The faith that makes possible the formulation of plans for a better world, and then nurtures the will to work for their achievement, is the basic faith of liberal Christians. Never more needed than today, to restore the self-respect and fortify the self-confidence of mankind, the obligation to proclaim that faith in the spirit of Jesus and for the sake of his brethren in every land and of every name, is laid upon us now with inescapable and invigorating urgency.

Psychological Effects of the War on Pastoral Care¹

AUSTIN PHILIP GUILLES

If actual bombing comes to our parishes, many of us may be needed to assist in routine civilian work. Clergymen may for a time be effective in practical matters comparable to this sort of washing of the disciples' feet. But there are reasons why we ministers shall soon find ourselves relieved of these tangible civilian duties.

People in these times seem to have a sharper, more discriminating sense of especial fitness in certain individuals for doing certain things.² Laymen believe, even if the clergy do not, that men who have been "set apart" should not be doing things that others could do just as well. Again, the interest in opposites appears to be active in an exceptional manner at these times of extreme need, suffering, and death. With so much destruction going on and so many individuals being asked to give up their lives, the questions of the indestructible nature of the soul, the persistence of personality after death, and possible reunion of loved ones in another life, take on new interest.

The nearer war comes to the reality-consciousness, the nearer it comes to the actual experience, and the more closely it comes to affect the lives, loved ones, and possessions of people, the more these people demand that the clergyman be the specialist, if not the expert he is supposed to be, in matters of the soul.

War for the human race is an experience of regression, just as alcoholism produces regression in an individual or a group. By analogy with the theory that as intoxication sets in, the last acquired refinements, controls, or orientations of the individual are the first to go, we may well ask, at what points in the inner lives or character structures of our people we should expect to find first indications of disintegrating processes? The answer to this question can be determined by examining the changing attitudes toward spiritual

1. This article is the substance of a lecture delivered by Dr. Guiles before the Biennial Institute of the Unitarian Ministerial Union held at Greenfield, Massachusetts, August 26, 1942.

2. Of general interest on this subject is the article "Nerves and the War," *Harpers*, (May, 1942), pp. 630ff. See also R. D. Gillespie, M.D., *Psychological Effects of the War* (New York, 1942).

realities, and we may expect the changes to appear in their clearest forms in the lives of our Christian families. They are changes of attitude that involve those high ethical and spiritual actualities that have been achieved by religious discipline.

The marks of a high moral and spiritual, a Christian culture, are the following: First, an appreciation of and a genuine, functioning belief in eternal life, a belief that expresses itself in true worship, durational God-consciousness, and lack of fear of life or death; secondly, a high degree of socialization in which narcissism has been overcome and in which non-attachment—the parental stage in the emotional life—is achieved; thirdly, the high ethic of the Sermon on the Mount is sincerely accepted and persistently followed. Finally, a spiritually mature life would view chastity in human relations as the ideal, an attitude that accepts and respects the actual differences of the sexes, includes unashamed and wholly responsible mutual expressions between individuals, and recognizes as the basis for family life a true monogamy that reaches increasingly into the territory of previously irresponsible and primitive unconscious thought, wish and deed.

Hence, three of the pastoral problems which would be expected to come to the fore under war conditions would be: (1) a sense of unreality in spiritual things reflected in the neglect of worship, no adequate motive for living, and the presence of fear; (2) breakdown in morale, separation from home and normal occupation,—dissociations leading to a-sociality and disloyalties, and leading eventually to individual and emotional isolation; and (3) sexual laxity, family disintegration, and a generally lowered evaluation of women and children.

Let us test these assumptions by two or three investigations which have a direct bearing on our topic.

II.

Early reports from some of the chaplains in the armed forces concerning conditions in the camps, inform us that sexual laxity is the most conspicuous mark of the lack of religion among the men. And they add that the Surgeon General, in spite of all the criticism he received for putting the problem of venereal disease among our soldiers so frankly before us, was presenting only the military or the physiologically alarming aspect of the problem.

Next they refer to the lack of group solidarity among the men.

"There has been something queer about these men," they say. "It is as though they lacked a primary motive of some sort or another. They just don't seem to want to get into this fight. They talk about getting it over with. And then they go off into their individual theories about the causes of the war and how it's all going to profit them."

And finally these chaplains say, "No, the Protestant men don't come to the chaplain's services the way you'd expect them to, in spite of the chapels that have been built. Some of us take the services to groups which are assigned to special duties. But we don't get much response. And word comes to us in a roundabout way that these men are scared, and the thing they're most scared about is dying."

Now I have no more use for public utterances of a discouraging nature just at this time than you do. And I am well aware of the fact that there are encouraging facts that have been reported by the chaplains. But I take it that we are a group of workmen who feel a bond not only to our country but also to each other, and we are honest in wanting to know all the facts. Moreover, the impatient and the too evangelical amongst us must learn to view our tasks at least to some degree in the light of history. For in spite of all the heroism of those first American world-minded Christians, Samuel Mills and Adoniram Judson, of Robert Wilder, John R. Mott and their Student Volunteers, the world was not won for Christ in their generations.

Here, then, we have some support for assuming that irreligion or fear, unbrotherliness, and irresponsible eroticism are among the major problems of our time so far as ministry to individual people of our parishes is concerned.

III.

A further verification can come from a study of parallels which many believe to exist between children and grown-ups who are under marked stresses and strains. A recent wartime study³ in social welfare and education reveals some facts that are pertinent here. Three thousand school children of all ages, unaccompanied by parents, were sent to Cambridge, England, under the evacuation scheme. As winter wore on, these children drifted home, in spite of government pleas, until within three or four months more than

3. See *The Cambridge Evacuation Survey*, edited by Susan Isaacs (London, 1941).

three quarters of them had gone back. Psychological and social workers, inquiring into the circumstances, talked with parents, foster-parents, teachers, and children. They asked the children to give written answers to a carefully prepared set of questions. They asked them also to write short essays on their views and feelings. Of course, they also made direct observations.

The workers presented these conclusions. The obvious reason for the children's return was that there was no bombing during the autumn and the winter. However, whether or not a child remained in a foster-home was not a question of finance, or material well-being, or health. It was the child's own happiness that was paramount. The child had to feel that it was liked and wanted in the new home. A genuine family affection and jealousy toward foster-mothers were the outstanding parents' motives for taking their children back. The principal defect of foster-parents was psychological inadaptability. It was not a matter of work or of cost.

The boys and girls did not differ much in their listing of "Things I like; things I miss." Father and mother, home and family, friends, pets, hobbies, and school were their answers. Much homesickness was avoided whenever the school moved en bloc, for then the sense of community was preserved.

Any tendency toward abnormality in the children involved non-adaptability in a home. The more normal was the child, the more adaptable and contented he was anywhere. The less normal children fell into these groupings: (a) the anxious, shut in, depressed; (b) the aggressive and quarrelsome; (c) the anti-social and delinquent. Mildly aggressive children adjusted themselves better than the mildly anxious, but extreme or advanced aggressives fared much worse than advanced anxiety children. Delinquents fared much better in hostels or camps.

The value of hostels for children whose relations with foster-homes were strained was early recognized. There no family relation at all existed. Thus it was found that a child's happiness depends on good family relationships, and that no family relationship is better than a bad one.

Failure in psychological adaptation among married people has a familiar ring in our ears. A device similar to the hostel is often resorted to whereby the wife or the husband can "get away from it all." "A change of climate," the old medical practitioners used to

call it. The Cambridge families managed to keep their incompatibilities well-hidden from the community until the small children were imported and left in their care. There is nothing equal to the unpredictable and the unexpected in children for accentuating the rigidities of their elders. Poor psychological adaptability in foster-parents suggests to us poor psycho-sexual adaptability or possible inadequacy. Is it not safe for us to conjecture that we would find no greater psychological or psycho-sexual adaptability among the married couples in our parishes, let us say in Newton or in Cambridge, Massachusetts, than was discovered in Cambridge, England? According to John Macmurray, the failure of spiritual, psychic, and erotic adaptation between husband and wife even in Christian families, is appalling. War conditions bring these facts to the surface.

The fact that homesickness was avoided where schools and teachers were moved as units suggests that much of the poor morale, the dissociations, and the lack of solidarity within our military training camps are the reflection of homesickness in another age group. We could find, I am sure, the same sort of splits in social solidarity or brotherhood, in our own parishes.

But in the studies referred to, the most important observation of all had to do with the children living in an environment where they were loved and wanted. Only in such an environment did they exhibit no unreal anxiety, only there did they manifest the real signs of life with no fear of death.

A soldier without religion, afraid to die; a parishioner with poor adaptation, not at home in the world; worse yet, a soldier or a parishioner holding to the sort of religion that fosters strains and breakdowns,—there is no hostel in our world to which we can send these unfortunate creatures.

Hence, we have some indication that good religion for adults parallels good family relationships for children. Communal ties so necessary for children are possible only where social ties and loyalties obtain among their elders. And the shrieks and surprises of teeming child life, in its power and purity, call forth defense and retaliation from unfortunate married couples who have become psychologically and sexually rigid or unadaptable. Such rigidities of foster-parents, and we may be sure they are not absent among the parishioners in our churches, reflect other views of life, society and sex than those which have given the mother and child so high a place in the Chris-

tian, and especially in the Protestant tradition.

It is obvious, therefore, that absence of the personal love and care of a God, homesickness for those social bonds which used to exist but which now are broken, and increased signs of anxiety and aggressiveness in immature and irresponsible eroticism, are the problems on which we must study and work if we are to minister effectively to our people in time of war.

IV.

We are informed by another British study,⁴ which seems to verify the one previously mentioned, that the view current in medical and administrative quarters, namely, that air-raids would give rise to widespread war-neuroses, has proved to be a mis-statement of an unconsciously apprehensive and appetitive type. (This is now referred to by the author, and by other writers, as the "Mass-Neurosis Myth.") By way of reaction, a "No-Neurosis Myth" is now in process of formation, a myth that is also contrary to the facts. The actual incidence of pathological reactions to air-raids was no greater than might have been anticipated by a psychological assessment of predisposing and precipitating factors already in existence in people or ready to be called forth.

Shock reactions may be divided into two main groups which overlap to some extent. The first group is designated by clinical symptoms: there are the major ones corresponding to the classical war-neuroses except with more extensive scatter; and there are the minor ones of the same type, but capable of spontaneous resolution within a few days or weeks. The second group is marked by exaggerated social reactions such as anger, resentment, grievances, aggressiveness, suspicion and persecutory ideas, with resulting reduced social capacities, passivity, confusion, lack of working capacity, lack of power of adaptation.

In the instances observed in London, the actual traumatic factors were either (in severe cases) direct hits or long, severe bombing, or (in mild cases) severe blasts with some physical injury. The predisposing factor most observed in raid-shock was chronic maladjustment. The psychopathic types were the ones that reacted most severely, together with those suffering from emotional instability, poor adaptation, lack of capacity to work, and character peculiarities.

4. See *The International Journal of Psychoanalysis* (London), XXII, Parts 3 & 4; XXIII, Part 1.

Given satisfactory affective ties with a doctor, psychoneurotic cases preserved a considerable degree of stability. Psychotic types showed little reaction unless directly involved in a hit.

Other precipitating factors in the British experience were: in severe cases, death of relatives or neighbors in the same raid, and responsibility for other members of the family involved; in mild cases, grave or fatal casualties among strangers and extensive damage to the room occupied; factors such as old age, previous evacuation or break-up of family, lack of friends, responsibility for children, lack of shelter protection, poor anti-aircraft defenses, social and economic insecurity.

Post-raid conditions acted as aggravating factors: prolonged burial under debris, poor reserve organizations, disruption of social services, inefficiency of welfare arrangements, splitting up of family, extensive destruction of houses or shops in raided areas, disturbances in work, economic difficulties.

From the psychological side, in most cases the anxiety factor was decisive. Realistic anxiety was proportionate to real danger in all except children, psychotics, and those suffering from excessive unrealistic anxiety. Unrealistic anxiety was most pronounced in areas bordering on raided districts (belts or tracks). Absence of anxiety in safe areas depended upon a minimal amount of general war disturbance.

In the British experience, the psychic situation underlying most anxieties, that is guilt, was thought to be disturbance of existing balance of affective relationships, whether due to death of relatives, evacuation, domestic or social upheavals, or overactivation of unconscious sadism or masochism.

Individuals most frequently affected were of the so-called narcissistic type, or they were of the anxiety character group, or the groups having strong latent homosexual proclivities. In children of the age-group two to three enjoying effective emotional contact with parents, no signs of traumatic shock were observed. But where positive parental contacts were absent, where parents were killed in the raid, where protective parents showed obvious signs of anxiety the child's acute anxieties or inhibitions of a marked nature became manifest.

Realistic fear was proportionate to the understanding of real danger. Real danger conditions also reduced the effectiveness of already established repression systems. There appear to be no essential

causal differences between service and civilian cases, although it is a mistake to liken bombings of the civilian population to frontline conditions.

As we view these conclusions from the British experience, what may we draw from them that will be useful to us should our communities begin to suffer from acute war disturbances?

We are going to have the same kinds of people under air-raid conditions that we have now. But, due to precipitating factors, we may expect demands for pastoral care to increase enormously in the two following groups:

A. The emotionally unstable, such as hysterical mothers who will upset their children; men and women who have no true inner sexual designations, like the narcissists and the latent homosexuals; and the chronics who are poorly adapted and peculiar.

B. The other group consists of those who show their anxiety by social reactions of anger, resentment, grievances, aggressiveness, and by reduced social adaptations as seen in passivity, confusion, fatigue, and increased suspicion.

These are the people in our parishes who are afraid of living and afraid of dying. Their religion is unreal, just as their anxieties are essentially unreal. They have never felt at home in the world. They have not felt toward the Creator as though they were personally loved and wanted. Consequently when the outside framework of life is disturbed, their anxiety and fear are increased. They have had no feeling of the reality of God, nor of the reality of their own souls. They have not truly worshipped. Profane living and fear have been their portions. Hence, just as symptoms of these conditions become more marked in our soldiers being prepared for battle, in children placed in foster-homes where there is spiritual disorder in the foster-parents, and among civilians under air-raid conditions in England,—so we may expect increased manifestations of these troubles among our parishioners as the war goes on.

The second conclusion we may draw from the British experience is that the psychic situation underlying most anxieties was the disturbance of previously existing balances in affective relationships. These disturbances may have come from death of relatives, evacuation, domestic or social upheavals, or temporary separations. Psycho-neurotic patients whose affective relationships with their physicians remained undisturbed stood the raids well. And children enjoying

effective emotional contact with their parents showed no signs of traumatic shock.

This suggests to us that, as the breaking of affective ties between relatives and friends is inevitable under modern war conditions, we should do well to strengthen the bonds of parishioners to their pastor by every possible means. If medical doctors doing psycho-therapeutic work with patients can carry these patients through the bombings of London without having their anxieties break through their controls, then the parish minister ought to be able to do the same for all who look upon him as their mediator, friend, and guide. The inner poise and quiet which the parents experience between themselves and their pastor, they will exercise toward their children. There is no question in my mind that the pastor and his family should be the core and center in the community to which people can bind themselves in Christian love and care, without self-consciousness or fear.

In England conditions of real danger reduced the effectiveness of already established repression systems both in groups and in individuals. This fact is of significance for pastoral psychology. I doubt whether pastors generally have understood that repression systems, although they do not reflect solutions to old problems and thus do not contribute to man's liberation from early conflicts, do serve as warders-off of anxiety, provided instinctual forces and life-situations do not become too formidable. True repression systems operate automatically, that is, outside of consciousness. These should be distinguished from inhibitions and suppression mechanisms, which have in them varying degrees of conscious awareness.

The prevalence of sexual laxity is therefore a serious problem, whether we meet it in the armed forces or in our civilian population. For here is something concerning which the individual may be more a victim than a conscious malefactor. Thus these problems of sexual laxity among our soldiers, poor psycho-sexual adaptation in our married parishioners, and the unsuccessful operation of inhibiting measures for the youth of our society, cannot be dealt with effectively by denunciatory methods, nor by rational or conscious effort. Just as I believe the break-through of these repressed conflicts is a mark of past irreligion in families of our society, so I believe that the only force that can bring these powers of *eros*, intermingled with the aggressive aspects of personality, under control and constructive ex-

pression, is the power of Divine Love, expressed in human personality, the pastor. But, as with the acetylene welder, the torch must be properly lighted, and blowing with the right mixture of fuel and oxygen. There must be proper metals in hand, and all must be directed to the crack which must be cleaned out and welded. Spot-welding has been successfully applied to the building of bombers. It must come in pastoral care in the building of individuals and of brotherly groups.

V.

There may be those who will complain, "Why doesn't the author get to the point and tell us what we are to *do* as the effects of war come nearer to our communities?"

Were it my good fortune to go with a group of clergymen through a year's work, and if I were allowed to lay out the course, the first thing I should search for would be a sense of reality as to the nature of the present world in which we live. Books like Sandburg's *The War Years*, de Sales' *The Making of Tomorrow*, and Sorokin's four volumes on our Western "sensate" culture have helped me, as have also my reading of Lewis Mumford, Waldo Frank, and Gerald Heard. We should study reliable books on Russia, China, and India, whose peoples, along with those of the United States, some of us believe, will determine the culture of the future. And I should not omit the books of such ecumenical Christians as Adolph Keller, William Paton, W. E. Hocking, and Kenneth Latourette.

Having acquired a fair realization of our location and the way ahead in Christian sociology, I should emphasize the necessity that each pastor work out for himself an adequate doctrine of man. I should suggest that not much time be spent on what theologians have had to say about man since the Reformation, with the possible exceptions of Schleiermacher and Troeltsch and more recently Tillich and Niebuhr. But I should study the doctrine in church history and in the analytical psychologists beginning with Freud. And I should hope to approach, even if afar off, the insights of such novelists as Thomas Mann. There is no better psychological study of man than his series of four books on Joseph.

Along with these studies would go (a) faithful clinical calling on individuals and families, followed by (b) immediate careful recordings of beliefs, personality facts and pertinent observations, with (c) occasional written summaries for the deepening of our under-

standing of these individuals, and with (d) group discussion of successes and failures in soul-nurture and treatment.

Finally, I should hope to stimulate by this process, an interpretation of the Gospel from the pulpit which would reveal the God of Jesus Christ to people and would reveal people to themselves, in no uncertain terms.

This is a day of sharpened contrasts. As Professor Hocking intimated in his lecture at the recent Congregational General Council at Durham, either the God of the Christians has *power* and *acts*, or He doesn't. One thing we all know now, if we never knew it before: *there is power in evil* and it is acting with a vengeance!

In closing I want to recommend a book that has been of great value to me, namely, Baron von Hügel's *Eternal Life*. Only the full awareness in us of the numinous, as described by von Hügel, according to our capacities,—the "pneumatic" in all its simultaneity, in every situation and occasion, will be sufficient for our day. As St. Paul put it, only if there is complete change in us from the strictly human constituents of *psyche* and *sarx*, the sensuous psyche and the sensuous flesh, to the potentially immortal *soma*, the body which can be touched by the Spirit of the Divine, and the *pneuma*, the Eternal,—only then can we be adequate mediators between God and our people, regardless of the psychological effects of the war.

Method and the Future of Theology

MERLE WILLIAM BOYER

Students in the field of religion who are in quest of a theology, whether it be for the purpose of satisfying their own intellectual and religious needs or for the purpose of gaining knowledge and conviction as equipment for religious leadership, are faced with a task that is discouraging if not heartbreaking in its difficulty. The cross-currents of intellectual and cultural life are so complex that they have come to bewilder rather than invigorate. Interwoven in the complex, cultural pattern which confronts every man are a multitude of theological systems and philosophies of religion which serve to add further confusion to the puzzle rather than to offer a key to its solution.

Of all the intellectual disciplines that lay claim to yielding truth, the studies that are commonly listed under the head of "Theology" are probably the most subject to criticism. The theologian is said to have no definite subject-matter for his study, and to lack a satisfactory and generally accepted method of procedure. Radical empiricism with its emphasis on knowledge of "atomic facts" as the only genuine knowledge, historicism with its emphasis on the relative nature of all knowledge arising within the social matrix, psychology with its tendency to unmask the hidden motives of man's religious speculations have conspired to undermine the theological methods and pre-suppositions of the past.

Moreover, the inability of the normative sciences in general and of theology in particular to cope with the complex problems of contemporary life assumes greater seriousness as the methods of the exact sciences fail to produce expected results in their attempted application in the *Geisteswissenschaften*. This failure has given rise to what is already considered "*die Krise der Wissenschaft*"¹ in Germany; and it is a question of grave concern as to whether or not a return to an irrational vitalism may not usurp the place held by faith in the scientific method in the nineteenth century. Workers within the exact sciences have become cautious about claiming validity for their techniques outside their limited fields. Problems of the normative sciences are being referred more and more to workers in

¹Wolfrang Köhler, *The Place of Value in a World of Facts* (New York: Liveright & Co., 1938), pp. 10 f.

these fields. It is incumbent upon the specialists to develop methods that will meet the situation at hand.

Theology should serve the practical purpose of acting as one of the chief integrating forces within the society. This is the traditional role that religion and with it theology have played in the history of cultures. Unfortunately, theology seems to be in no position to fulfil this important function today. On the other hand, there is no adequate substitute available to take its place. For the discerning man who feels a personal need for a satisfactory theology and who is aware, at the same time, of the value that religion and theology hold for the cultural well-being of a nation, all this can mean only one thing. It means that as a theological inquirer he is faced with the most crucial intellectual task of the day, and that to all intents and purposes he has no tools at hand for successfully pursuing that task. Under the pressure of this situation he may give up his quest in despair, in which case he usually drifts into one of the currents of thought which offers the least resistance for him. The other alternative open is for him to set out to reexamine the presuppositions in all theological thinking. If he pursues the latter course he is immediately confronted with the question of method, for he will note that the conclusions reached in theology depend on the method employed by the theologian.

In the light of this situation, which may or may not be the result of a temporary phase of Western culture, it would seem a legitimate exercise in theological propaedeutic to numerate some of the methods used today by Christian theologians and on this basis attempt to formulate the possibilities immediately open to the inquirer in quest of a satisfactory theology. We shall offer a brief survey of the methods employed by four contemporary schools of theology to attain and verify religious knowledge.²

The Neo-Thomists are probably the most consistent and thorough of these theologians who emphasize a method of rationalism, that is, a method in which pure conceptual reason is considered as a source of knowledge. The disciples of Aquinas have always been outspoken rationalists. One of their tasks as conceived by them is to carry on a

²The methods of knowing that can be employed in theology are similar to the methods of gaining knowledge in other fields. They are listed by William Pepperell Montague as the methods of Authoritarianism, Mysticism, Rationalism, Empiricism, and Pragmatism. Cf. *The Ways of Knowing: or the Methods of Philosophy* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1925), p. 34.

continuous struggle against irrationalism in whatever form it may appear, whether it be in the philosophy of Bergson, or in Pragmatism, or in Barthianism. As followers of the Aristotelian tradition, the Thomists cannot be said to be extreme rationalists. Their rationalism allows some place for empirical knowledge. Moreover, they are dependent upon other methods for grasping first principles, namely, the methods of intuition and revelation.³ Nevertheless, formal Aristotelian logic ultimately becomes the effective tool for knowing as emphasized by this school. From this principle there follows the conception of the degrees of natural knowledge,⁴ with knowledge of metaphysical principles conceived as the most inclusive and certain form of knowledge, while knowledge of the world of the senses is regarded as subsidiary knowledge of a less comprehensive nature. Above all natural knowledge the Thomist is led to affirm super-rational knowledge which has more kinship with metaphysics than with any other type of knowledge, but which can only be fully understood as revealed knowledge.

Knowledge is verified, according to these thinkers, by referring the principle or proposition in question to its proper field for verification. The Thomist asks the question: What level of knowledge is represented in the supposed knowledge before me? If it remains on the lower level of knowledge of the sensible world, then we are free to use all the techniques of verification common to the empirical sciences, for no Thomist would claim that he is an enemy of empirical science. If higher questions of metaphysics are involved, then rational techniques of logical coherence must determine the issue. Questions of super-rational nature involving the highest levels of knowledge must be referred to revealed theology, which means that authority offers the final criterion for verification.⁵ Neo-Thomism begins with a method of intuition, proceeds upon a rationalistic basis of inference, and ends with an authoritarian method of verification.

Karl Barth, as a representative of another tendency within contemporary Christian thought, stands at the opposite pole from the Neo-Thomists. Immersed in an intellectual *milieu* in which the

³Etienne Gilson, *The Unity of Philosophical Experience* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1937), pp. 313f.

⁴Cf. Jacques Maritain, *The Degrees of Knowledge* (London: Centenary Press, 1937).

⁵M. C. D'Arcy, *The Nature of Belief* (London: Sheed & Ward, 1931), ch. VII.

question of the possibility of any Christian theology assumed paramount importance, Karl Barth has developed a technique for theology which is almost unique in the history of Christian thought. Scepticism becomes for Barth one of the basic methods of approach to theology. Reason can be used to show the limits of reason. Then Christian theology can begin its work. Barth's method as employed, for example, in his "pneumatic exegesis" of *The Epistle to the Romans*⁶ is a method by which paradoxes are martialled before the reader until man is brought to the consciousness of the finiteness of his intellect as well as of the finiteness of all purely human modes of attaining release from the results of a life lived in a state of tension. In the end, this method should lead to philosophic scepticism, and many of the Barthians could be considered philosophic sceptics. But as a Christian, the theologian is now in a position where religious knowledge is possible, even though it may never be certain.

The Barthians cut the Gordian knot of epistemological problems by shifting the basis of religious knowledge from man as subjective knower to God as revealer of all religious knowledge. Religious knowledge is God's revelation to man. As soon, however, as Barth speaks of God's revelation, critical scepticism breaks down; for it now becomes necessary to answer the basic question of how we can know when and through what means God reveals himself. Like all sceptical thinkers the Barthians find it impossible to be thorough-going sceptics. For that reason their theological method undergoes revision at this point. Theologians of the past have usually adopted one of several methods when confronted with the question of knowledge about revelation. They have fallen back upon a method of authority, a method of intuition, or a method of rationalism. Karl Barth has been forced more and more into a position where he has had to make use of the method of authority. "The Word of God" as found in the Church, in the Bible, in preaching, in the Holy Spirit becomes the final court of appeal. Barth refuses, however, to clarify exactly what elements in the Church, Bible, preaching, and the testimony of the Holy Spirit are to be considered as "The Word." He falls back upon his use of the sceptical dialectical method once more, with the result that his answer to the problem of the how of revelation is only partial, while the question of verification is almost entirely avoided.

⁶Karl Barth, *The Epistle to the Romans* (Tr. Hoskyns; London: Oxford University Press, 1933).

He has been accused of tending toward a deductive method,⁷ and if he follows the precedent of the later sixteenth century reformers this may be the method adopted in the completion of his theological system.

The theology of Anglo-Catholicism offers an interesting example of an approach to Christian theology that may be characterized as that of an historical eclecticism. Anglo-Catholicism claims to be a *via media* between Protestantism and Roman Catholicism. It has never accepted an either-or basis for Christian theology as an inevitable or desirable approach. Christian life and history, individual experience within the culture, the mystery of the creative activity of God—these varied factors in Christian history and experience make it impossible, it is claimed, to accept any one-sided approach in a situation that is so extremely complex. This refusal to be driven into the acceptance of one particular theological tradition has given the Anglo-Catholic group its peculiar place in contemporary theology.

That the method of the Anglo-Catholic theologians has an important historical element could hardly be denied. Historical comprehension of the life, teachings, and experience of the Christian church is an essential preliminary step for theological construction among these thinkers.⁸ Proceeding from this basis the Anglo-Catholic is at liberty to employ a selective process in deciding as to what constitutes the central stream of Christian thought. The emphasis on the Platonic tradition within Christian theology, an emphasis readily noted in the work of the Anglo-Catholics, constitutes this underlying basis of selection. There is probably no philosophic tradition in western thought that is more congenial to the eclectic method of a *via media* than a modernized Platonism. Philosophic methods of intuitionism, rationalism, and analytical criticism are to be found in Plato's own writings. Christian mysticism of the Middle Ages has its roots in Neo-Platonism, while on the other hand the empirical emphasis of the Renaissance grew out of a renewed study of Plato. The Platonic tradition which is deeply embedded in the creeds of the Church of the first five centuries is certainly a valuable asset to a theology which aims

⁷Otto Piper, *Recent Developments in German Protestantism* (London: Student Christian Movement Press, 1934), p. 134.

⁸Cf. *Essays Catholic and Critical*, ed. by E. G. Selwyn (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1934). Note the preponderance of historical material in this comprehensive collection.

to be Christian, critical, and a *via media* at one and the same time.⁹

For the Anglo-Catholic, religious knowledge is revealed knowledge attainable through the life of the Church in its sacraments, in its individual and collective experience down through the ages, in its use of consecrated reason put under the guidance of that collective experience. This would seem to lead ultimately to the position of the Roman Catholic thinkers. That it does not result in commitment to Rome is due to the fact that the Anglo-Catholics are not satisfied to have religious knowledge verified only on the basis of authority. Religious knowledge must be "verifiable at the three-fold bar of history, reason and spiritual experience."¹⁰ By accepting an authoritative view of religious knowledge without strictly defining the basis of that authority, the Anglo-Catholics place themselves in a position where they can be accused of inconsistency by radical and conservative alike. It is a question, however, whether such inconsistency is not inevitable for every theology which strives to find a *via media* in an age of cultural confusion and religious uncertainty.

During the past few generations English and American thinkers in the field of religion who are heirs to the empirical traditions of English and American philosophy have made an effort to place the empirical method as central in investigating the role of knowledge in theology.¹¹ F. R. Tennant is an example of a thinker who has consistently and patiently attacked the problems involved, with the purpose in mind of basing theology on empirical grounds. Knowledge is empirical, commonsense knowledge in Tennant's system. However, his views tend more in the direction of a modified pragmatism rather than toward a naive acceptance of a correspondence theory of truth. He affirms that "it is not logical certification but pragmatic verification that is the proof of science, and not certainty but probability that is the guide of life."¹²

It is a question whether Tennant's theology can be considered as intrinsically empirical in its method. When he is faced directly with

⁹Cf. Paul Elmer More's penetrating historical study, *The Greek Tradition*, 6 vols. (Princeton: Princeton University Press).

¹⁰*Essays Catholic and Critical*, op. cit., p. 95.

¹¹Cf. Peter Anthony Bertocci, *The Empirical Argument for God in Late British Thought* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1938).

¹²F. R. Tennant, *Philosophy of the Sciences* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1932), p. 104.

the problems of religion he wavers between a consciousness of the limitations of empiricism in theology and a suspicion of all other methods which claim to go beyond empiricism.¹³ His method of approach may be considered an eclecticism in which the empirical test for verification is emphasized. It is doubtful whether a strict empiricism leads to inferences upon which a Christian theology such as that of Tennant can be based. Many empiricists, the Logical Positivists, for example, cannot get beyond a physicalist basis by using the empirical method.

In the end, Tennant reaches conclusions about empiricism which give the type of empiricism advocated by him an entirely different emphasis from that of the empiricism of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. He has nothing of the naive faith in science to grasp ultimate reality such as characterized many thinkers of these centuries. However, once empiricism loses its naive faith in the absoluteness of conclusions resulting from that method, it must necessarily fall back upon a theory of probability as is the case with Tennant. Here rests one of the intrinsic difficulties of the application of the empirical method in theology, for it is doubtful whether the religious consciousness will be satisfied with probability. One of its requirements is that of certainty; and if it cannot attain certainty by one method of knowing in religion, it tends to take refuge in another, and perhaps less exacting, method for gaining religious certitude.

Our brief survey of the methods employed by four influential schools of theologians in their efforts to produce theology that is applicable and effective in the modern world indicates that there is no generally accepted view as to what methods are the most successful in gaining knowledge of a religious nature. Generally speaking the methods of authority and of intuition are the methods that have been given the most prominent place in theologies which claim to be Christian. In liberal Protestantism these two characteristic methods took the form of an appeal to history among the descendants of Ritschl and an appeal to "religious experience" among the descendants of Schleiermacher. Even these bulwarks have now collapsed. We find Harnack's appeal to history metamorphosed into the relativistic historicism of Troeltsch. The church historian becomes identified

¹³Cf. F. R. Tennant, *Philosophical Theology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1928). This vacillation is noticeable throughout the second volume of this comprehensive work.

with the secular historian, for he has difficulty retaining a conviction of the authoritative nature of the Christian tradition that he represents as set over against the traditions of other religions. We find Schleiermacher's appeal to the "religious experience" of the Christian believer metamorphosed into the universal mystical experience of the *numinous* of Rudolf Otto. The Christian theologian using the method of appeal to religious experience is transformed into a psychologist studying the phenomena of mysticism.

It is likely that some type of intellectual interest in religion will occupy a place among the activities of men in the future as it has in the past. Whether that interest can take the form of a theology which presupposes the classical Christian tradition, as has been the case in the Western world up until recently, remains to be seen. At present there remain, in our opinion, a limited number of possibilities for the construction of "Christian" theology. These possibilities, it must be recognized, are conditioned by methodological approaches made available within a culture whose intellectual life is in a state of turmoil and transition.

First of all, Christian thought may adopt an attitude of temporary scepticism, using the term scepticism in the sense of a distrust of reason. Realizing the status of contemporary conflicts in the field of theory of knowledge and profoundly aware of the dependence of all thought upon the *Zeitgeist* of the era in which he happens to be living, the Christian thinker may abandon systematic theology for the time being, awaiting the sociological and religious changes that may create a mental attitude and a religious milieu in which theology will again be possible. In the meanwhile he is free to give his religious life exercise in devotion and practical interests, and to dedicate his intellectual efforts toward achieving ends within these fields. The liberal churchman who distrusts theology and who devotes his attention to the social gospel may be giving tacit assent to scepticism. Such may also be the case with the churchman whose interests are centered in liturgics. On the other hand scepticism of this nature may be found among the supernaturalists who await the time of a new revelation or outpouring of the Holy Spirit which is regarded as alone capable of renewing the life of theology. It may be maintained as well by the Christian political revolutionary who is looking forward to a new age in which social uniformity of some kind or other will make possible, and perhaps obligatory, the adoption of a common

method and a common theology. Needless to say the adoption of any type of scepticism, useful as it may be as a temporary measure, can never lead the informed inquirer to a satisfactory theology. It ends in the negation rather than in the construction of theology.

A second possibility for Christian theology is that it refuse to recognize the seriousness of the present intellectual and cultural confusion, and that it adopt one of the ways of knowing that will make theology possible. On the adoption of a method, such a theology can then find a basis for full elaboration and a comparatively secure apologetics as long as it is unaware of or capable of ignoring the sharp thrusts that can be made at the position adopted. The basis of selection is in most of these cases arbitrary, depending upon the cultural background or tradition; or it may be that the basis of selection is pragmatically motivated, and that method and data are selected on the basis of the commonly-accepted view of a denominational group as to the purpose and function of religion.

A third possibility for Christian theology is the possibility of confining theology to "Church theology." Karl Barth has made the first serious effort in this direction. In this case theology is written for a limited constituency, namely, the "Church" as set over against society. Its essential functions are to attain pure doctrine within the limits of the "Church" and to affirm the "Church's" faith in opposition to the secular thought of the age. The intellectual difficulties facing theology are recognized and taken seriously in this theology. The entire gamut of contemporary thought in its critical relativism and cultural disintegration is taken for granted. However, there is no solution offered to the problem of religious knowledge, but rather a selection of a way of knowing based on an arbitrary act of faith. Theology is possible for the congregation and for the Christian churches; but it is a theology that has admitted defeat before the onslaught of the problems of modern society and of modern thought. It is essentially the theology of a church of the catacombs. It is a theology of a church that is in radical opposition to the world, not of a church that seeks to redeem the world. Following this lead, theology abdicates its all-important cultural role of integrating the religious motivation of the community as a whole. The dynamic aspiration of a people, which has always moved in religious channels, is consequently abandoned to any chance leadership that may arise.

A fourth possibility is that of the frank adoption of a method of

eclecticism. Probably all vital theological thinking today is more or less eclectic. In times of great cultural interfusion and transformation this is almost inevitably the case. Eclecticism is the last desperate effort of theology to reconcile diversities and thus maintain its place as the discipline which integrates the religious aspirations and convictions of a people. This same eclecticism, inevitable and invaluable as it may be, nevertheless constitutes the great weakness of contemporary theology. Eclecticism as theology is passive. It cannot, or at least usually does not, act as a creative force within the culture. Eclecticism is never unbiased. There is always latent some criterion for selection, and when that criterion is unveiled an eclectic theology loses its hold upon those who do not subscribe to the criterion adopted as the proper basis for determining the nature of the methods and materials to be selected for theological construction.

A fifth possibility is to recognize the place of a secular philosophy of religion operating as an intellectual discipline without allegiance to any specific historic faith but drawing upon resources of all that are relevant to its problems. It would seem that for better or worse the present task of American religious thought is that of pushing empiricism to its utmost limits. The historic and sociological situation, as well as the peculiar gifts of a people, have placed this task within the hands of the American thinker. The empirical approach has arisen from the life and experience of the churches of America as from no other churches in the long and varied history of Christianity, so that the pursuance of this task is legitimate for American theology even from the point of view of "Church Theology." The opportunities for empirical investigation within the normative sciences may close for many centuries as the scroll of history is unfolded within the next few generations. We have become acutely conscious in the twentieth century of the tenuous nature of a social and intellectual *milieu* which makes empirical study of social and religious questions possible. It may be literally impossible for another generation to pursue such empirical studies. If we consider the failures of the attempts of men like Tennant to construct an empirical theology with allegiance to Christian theology, it may be the best procedure to limit this task to a secular philosophy of religion until its possibilities are explored. In the light of this state of confusion in theology investigations endeavoring to establish a methodology for philosophy of religion on an empirical basis constitute a legitimate field of study.

To say that philosophy of religion can or should supplant theology would be an unwarranted inference from what has been written above. Philosophy of religion can do no more than serve as a tool for theology. It cannot be a substitute for theology any more than it can be a substitute for religious living. It takes a subsidiary role as soon as a dominant world-view becomes intellectually vital in a culture-group to the point where it can offer a satisfying theology, that is, a theology that expresses and symbolizes the object of devotion in line with the most enduring and comprehensive interests of the group. For the present, however, the task of perfecting this tool is a worthy endeavor for those who retain an invincible intellectual interest in the phenomena of religion. For the American one of the important phases of this task is the investigation of the possibilities of the empirical approach in philosophy of religion. A useful tool may thus be made ready for application in the construction of a theology which, it is hoped, will arise in the future as a result of the experiences of aspiration and hope, conflict and disappointment of the American people.

Determinism in Will and Nature

PAUL WEISS

We hold men responsible for some of the things they do. But if all human actions were determined, if they all were inescapable consequences of pre-existent states of affairs, men would not be responsible for *any* of the things they do. Men are not responsible for the movement of the stars or the force of gravitation; no more are they responsible for the way in which their bodies move or for what their minds conceive, if these are nought but the natural outcome of causes over which these men have no control.

We think we are right in holding men responsible. But we would not be right if they were not in fact free. If their actions were the outcome of causes over which they had no control, no one could be right who supposed that they were ethically accountable for anything at all. But if we who judge are also caught within a deterministic scheme, our judgments, though ethically not right, would still not be ethically wrong. We too would be without responsibility, neither bad nor good in holding other men to be responsible for what they do.

In a deterministic world both judge and judged would be metaphysical automata, unaccountable for anything they say, judge or accomplish. In such a world there could still be praise or blame. But it would not be responsibly bestowed. It would be just something that occurred, elicited by the compulsion of events. Had the judge a different constitution another equally inevitable and non-responsible distribution of praise and blame would have been obtained.

Suppose this were a deterministic world and there were some men who lauded all those who destroyed and hated, and heaped imprecations on those who improved and loved. Some of us would say that this was unfortunate, some of us would say that it was a matter of indifference, others perhaps might call it good and desirable. No one of us would be right, and no one of us would be wrong. The different expressions would all be on the same level, no more justified or unjustified than any other. Some of us would undoubtedly say that those who accepted some principle of science, or who couched their expressions in such and

such a form would be justified in making such judgments; but this contention itself would not be responsible. It would, in the nature of the case, express nothing more than the compelled reaction of someone to the conditions to which he was subject. We who say this now would, of course, also be without justification, and those who disagreed with us would, like us, be nothing more than reacting as they must by virtue of their constitutions and the world in which they are.

If this were a deterministic world, the statement that it was so, would not be a responsible one. Nor, on the other hand, would the statement that it was not a deterministic one. These statements would entrain different consequences perhaps; some people would necessarily react with affirmations to the one, and some would necessarily react with affirmations to the other. Neither would be right or wrong. They would merely be. The assertion that one set of consequences was fruitful, desirable, confirmatory, or the reverse, would itself be nothing more than a blind reaction, to which others obviously could not respond in the same way unless they had been so compelled. The determinist might say that those who did not speak as he did were mistaken, confused, unenlightened or misinformed, but that would just happen to be the kind of reaction which he had when confronted with such facts; nothing would have been wrong had he been compelled to say the opposite.

If this were a deterministic world the contention, that it was so, would be a stimulus to which some responded in one way and some in another. In such a world there could be other kinds of stimuli, and particularly one of the form, "this is not a deterministic world." Each stimulus would elicit various reactions from different people and that is all. Neither would be a theory, if by theory we mean that which is affirmed on one's own responsibility or which others can freely consider and adopt. Neither would be a truth, if by that we mean something corresponding to a fact, capable of being freely embraced and affirmed.

The more convinced a determinist is that he has a theory and that it is true, that it is something which men *ought* to accept, the more surely must he grant that it is false, since only thus can he expect to have someone pass a responsible judgment on its value and meaning. If determinism rules the day, we unfortunate-

ly cannot responsibly judge that it does. We must wait for the course of events to make us say this, and say that it is true.

Determinism tries to do a double thing, only one of which it confessedly allows. It tries on one hand to get everything inside a single pattern of events and on the other hand attempts to stand outside that pattern. If it can succeed in doing the former it precludes the possibility of the latter; if the latter is possible, the former is not.

At this point, perhaps, the determinist might be willing to make a distinction between a deterministic world of natural events and a realm where some degree of free judgment about that world can be made. But then either he becomes a dualist, dividing man's mind off from nature, or he affirms that every aspect of man is as much a part of nature as anything else. If he takes the former position, he is then confronted with the traditional problem of explaining how the two realms can come together, how a judgment can be a judgment of the world which lies outside, and how it can lead men to act within that world, with accuracy and despatch. If he takes the latter position, then he must allow that indeterminism, in some degree, might be found in any thing. If man is free to some extent there must, unless he be a universe to himself, be some freedom in the heart of everything, in will as well as in mind, in things as well as men.

To the foregoing, a number of replies might be offered. The first and most obvious is that different men do act and decide in different ways. Their actions vary in accordance with their constitutions, experiences and environment. The decisions and acts of one in good health diverge from those of one who is seasick or dying; energetic men stress one set of values, lazy men another. A courageous man is one who, as Aristotle long ago remarked, has been in the habit of doing courageous things. A man acts one way in the summer and another in the winter, one way in the tropics and another in the arctic, one way in public and another way in private; men are sensitive to the attitudes others assume towards them and change the course of their activities as they meet with approval and disapproval. It is wrong to judge men in the abstract; if justice is to be done one must take into account the conditions, beyond their control, to which they have been subject.

I do not see how these facts can be gainsaid. One might with Kant, to be sure, define them as irrelevant, and take ethics to be concerned solely with the internal self-determination of an isolated rational will. But to deny the relevance of psychological and biological constitutions, of training and experience, of environment and social setting is not only to divide a man into two unrelated parts, but is to overlook the fact that the most blundering mishaps and some of the cruelest acts are sustained by really good wills. The will may be willing but the flesh or the mind may be weak. Cowards may have good wills but they do not have the power to keep their legs from running away; sentimentalists may have good wills but they do not have the practical wisdom to know when help is to be withheld; fanatics may have good wills but they do not have the intelligence to know what folly is. One wills, after all, to do something, with this body and in this environment. To will in disregard of the body one has, and irrespective of where one is and what is needed, is to be flagrantly indifferent to what one can and ought to do. A good man not only has a good will. He has an appropriate body, one able to bring good decisions into play in the best and most effective possible way.

The point must therefore be granted, but it does not affect the issue. The question is not whether men are determined to some degree, but whether, despite all conditioning, they do not retain some capacity to act freely and effectively. Men in the same environment, conditioned in similar ways, have been known to act in quite divergent manners. All those who have similar bodies, have been brought up in similar traditions, helped and discouraged regarding similar fundamental issues, do not always respond in similar ways. One might, of course, insist that where actions diverge there some unknown cause is at work. But do we really save our theory, or do we only re-affirm it when we maintain that when it fails to work there is an unknown fact which will get it to work again? And what shall we say when an individual recasts his entire scheme? There are, after all, such phenomena as reform, conversion, treachery, sudden decisions surprising to all those who know the man most intimately. If these too are explained away as mere blind responses to irresistible forces, we are back again to a pure determinism with its inability responsibly to say that men are not in fact responsible.

A subtler form of dilute determinism stems from medieval days. According to this view the will, which is defined as an intellectual appetite, is necessarily determined by the absolute and perfectly satisfying good which is its end. It is to this it is irresistibly directed. But towards every other good the will is undetermined. It is because, says Maritain "the will is *internally and naturally necessitated* to absolutely satisfying happiness, it is free with respect to everything else."

This view rests on the supposition that the will is a definite and demarcated entity or power and that there is an object, to wit, God, which is its proper object. Yet there seems to be no such power as will except when we are willing, and the God which is supposed to be its terminus, seems to be one from which an atheist can readily turn away. But let the points be rejected, for they are not at the focus of the problem of free will. The question is, why does the will choose what it does choose? To this question the scholastic answers that "this is man's *absolute secret*, secret even *for himself*, a secret which he will learn only at the very moment when he makes his decision." But if the act is so secret how can a man be held responsible for it? If a man decides grave matters in absolute darkness, he cannot be held accountable for what he decides.

A more modern and palatable form of this doctrine it was the special object of idealists to develop. No better statement of it perhaps can be found than in the first chapter of Bradley's *Ethical Studies*. Bradley insists that the will is free. He denies, however, that it is capricious, deciding this way rather than that for no reason at all. According to him, the acts of a man issue from his character in predictable ways. The man would seem thus to be determined from within. But the character, says Bradley, is in the process of formation. This drives the issue back a step. Given the character at this moment, either what a man does follows irresistibly from the character he has, or it does not. If it does, then since he is born with some character or other, the first decision is determined by forces beyond control, the next is determined by that result and so on, so that the whole of his life must be viewed as a series of unavoidable decisions. But if we say as we must, and as Bradley somewhat contradictorily admits, that a man can at times make a radical decision, restructuring the

whole of his nature—and this without being in any way determined from within or without—then the source of his decisions cannot lie entirely in the character he has acquired, but must at least partly reside in a power which is still undetermined and free.

Dilute determinisms are unstable compromises. They try desperately to affirm that men are determined only to some degree, but then view the undetermined aspect as belonging to a realm apart, as being unknowable, or, self-contradictorily, as being determined, unable to act in any other way than it does. It is necessary to affirm with them that man is only partly determined and that the will is free. But one must insist that the will is knowable and an integral part of a single man, himself a part of nature like everything else. If man has a free will, freedom must permeate him; if he belongs to the same world as other things do, they must have something like that freedom as well.

The Nexus of Humility

ROWLAND GRAY-SMITH

Humility, Augustine said, is the first article of the Christian religion, and also the second and the third. A thousand years after him, the valiant Teresa put it thus: "Humility is queen, and empress, and sovereign over them all. In fine, one act of true humility in the sight of God is of more worth than all the knowledge, sacred and profane, in the whole world." These voices over the centuries are but an echo of the voice of Jesus and a recollection of his character. "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." "I am meek and lowly in heart."

Today our recollection of this ancient virtue may have faded. Perhaps we have forgotten its meaning. Or, understanding it full well, we have been glad to let it go. Yet he who would deliberately stamp it from his memory is none other than the Antichrist. One who boldly claims the title turns the first beatitude into the vilest servitude.

It was the Jews who with inexorable logic dared to deny the aristocratic equation (good = lofty = powerful = beautiful = fortunate = god-favored), and who with bottomless hatred—a hatred born of impotence—set their teeth in a formula: to wit, "only the wretched are good; the suffering, the sick, the unlovely are indeed the only servants of God and the only ones blessed of God—while you, O ye high and mighty, you are in all eternity the men of sin, of violence, of lust, the insatiable, the godless, and you will be in all eternity the unblessed, the accursed, the damned!" . . . With the Jews begins the slave morality, that morality which has a struggle of two thousand years behind it, one which we fail to note today, just because—it is victorious (*Genealogy of Morals*, 1:7).

Nietzsche's day is not yet done. And we cannot be other than grateful that one writer has so vigorously stated what we must remember if we forget humility: the conceit of anarchy, the vanity of blood and possessions, the pride of tyranny, the arrogance of contempt for the weak and helpless. It is good to know so well what must fill men's minds when emptied of humility.

We cannot say when humility was first consciously welcomed. Our New Testament noun for the virtue (*tapeinophrosune*) was not in use before the Christian era. And we have too hastily believed that its origins were only Jewish and Christian. We

have been too willing to permit its alternative to be called the "aristocratic equation." Should we not rather say that what is essentially good, is always and everywhere so? At all events, when we turn to the moral excellences extolled by the Greeks we find their ethical hero, so far from being a Nietzschean superman, was by no means devoid of humility.

When Aristotle attempted a concrete portrait of the character granted as ideal, this "lofty-minded" man, a repository, like Nietzsche's superman, of every nameable virtue, was also fully conscious of his own incomparable preeminence. Perhaps his knowledge of his exceptional quality was part of his perfection. Christians have had no difficulty in believing that Jesus was himself fully conscious of his own ethical preeminence. At the same time Aristotle's hero is "the sort of man to do kindnesses," and he does not bear himself loftily towards those of humble station. As a foil to loftymindedness is the vanity of those who imagine themselves superior simply because of their external advantages, and who think it proper to despise others because less privileged than themselves (*Ethics* 1124b).

Commenting on specific virtues, to the excellence of genuineness Aristotle opposes the braggartism (*alazoneia*) of the man who claims to possess praiseworthy virtues not actually possessed (*Ibid.* 1127b), and for the golden mean between bad temper and spiritedness he chooses the term meekness (*prautes*. *Ibid.* 1126a). In the New Testament "the vainglory (*alazoneia*) of life" is "not of the Father" (I John 2:16), and the Greek virtue of meekness has affinities with "the meekness (*prautes*) and gentleness of Christ" (II Cor. 10:1).

Theophrastus, Aristotle's immediate successor, deals with a species of vanity under the title of arrogance (*hyperphania*), defined as "a scorn for all the world beside oneself" (*Characters*, mss. no. 24). This vice is similarly condemned in the Bible, e.g., "Gird yourselves with humility, to serve one another: for God resisteth the proud (*hyperphanoi*), but giveth grace to the humble" (I Pet. 5:5 = Prov. 3:34 LXX). Theophrastus also ridicules the surly man, and the word he uses, "one-who-pleases-himself" (*authadeias*), refers comprehensively to all kinds of self-will, from unsociable manners to the denial of homage to the gods (*Characters*, no. 15). Philodemus, of the pagan Greek city of

Gadara, southeast of Galilee, writing in the first century B.C., and taking up Theophrastus' word, says, "The so-called surly man (*authades*) seems to be compounded of conceit, arrogance, and contemptuousness." In the New Testament the same word (*authades*), translated "self-willed," seems to have a similar meaning and is correspondingly condemned.

Other intimations of humility from pagan sources are provided in the four virtues that Ambrose christened "cardinal." Greek temperance called for the regulation of lust by a concern for public good; Greek courage included the risking of one's life for the state; Greek justice recognized the rights of every citizen; Greek wisdom appreciated the sanctity of a divine norm. The consciousness of neighbor was always there, and the consciousness of God. So there seems to be no good reason why humility should ever have seemed like "foolishness" to any reflective Greek, unless there is folly in making fraternity more inclusive.

Perhaps the sharpest clash between Christian humility and Greek ethics is between Christian and Stoic. Though Stoic indifference to everything "external" included indifference to a man's social status, whether slave or free, the Stoic mood was too strictly rational and individualistic to respond emotionally to social ties. Unlike the ethics of Plato and Aristotle, of Amos and Paul, all of which were rooted in both God and society, Stoic ethics were rooted in the "Universe" and not at all in society. That was the "foolishness" of Stoic ethics.

The direct ancestor of the Christian doctrine is the Hebrew tradition of humility, though the offspring did not bear all the characteristics of its ancestor. Judaism spoke in a couplet:

*The reward of humility and the fear of the LORD
Is riches, and honor, and life.*

Here (Prov. 22:4) humility is equated with the fear of Yahweh, an awesome lowliness of mind before the lofty inhabitant of eternity, who, as Providence, would reward this lowliness with prosperity.

This notion of rewarding humility with material prosperity cannot be found in the New Testament. "Blessed are ye poor" is the word of Jesus (Lk. 6:20). When Matthew turns the phrase he adds "in spirit" (Mt. 5:3), but not to change the meaning. For

two centuries the "poor" economically had been the "poor in spirit." Speaking generally, to be well to do was to be proud and irreligious. This was recognized by both Jesus and his followers. So distant is the New Testament from the notion of rewarding humility with material prosperity!

Yet much of the ancient meaning of humility is continued in Christianity. As a permanent feature of Christian character humility has three aspects, the first of which we distinguish as *an inner attitude of loving subjection to moral law*.

In the better Hebrew prophets, to whom, "the fear of Yahweh" meant the fear of failure in righteousness, humility is equated with respect for the moral law. This attitude is summarized in the familiar words: "He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" (Mic. 6:8).

This ancient meaning of humility abides. Not that we would grant finality to the particular content a Micah might give to "doing justly," but that we recognize ourselves as under authority. We are under an authority common to all men. Every man is under the same authority. The proud man is he who thinks he is a law unto himself. In his vanity he would have others think him subject to no moral law. In his self-conceit he would set his own profit against the general good. "We are so little and vain," says Pascal, "that the esteem of five or six persons about us is enough to content and amuse us" (*Thoughts*, 2:5).

The nobility of humility, as the character-value which respects moral law, was not unnoticed by Plato. In the *Laws* the Athenian remarks: "He who would be happy holds fast to justice, and follows in her company with all humility (*tapeinos*) and order; but he who is lifted up with pride, or elated by wealth, or rank, or beauty, who is young and foolish, and has a soul hot with insolence, and thinks he has no need of any guide or ruler, but is able himself to be a guide of others, he, I say, is left deserted of God" (4:7 Jowett).

But the recognition of moral authority may be a purely rational attitude, while the old Hebrew phrase, "the fear of the LORD," makes the emotional element predominant. This emotional element never ceased to be present. Though it is now no longer a trembling fear of punishment for disobedience to authority, yet tremulous-

ness there is. The humble man stands in fear of wounding those he loves, and, if he is humble, whom does he not love? When this humility fails, there is room for the kindred emotion, penitence. But while humility endures there is no place for penitence. "Great peace have they which love thy law" (Psa. 119:165).

The second aspect of Christian humility is *the acceptance of superior talents and attainments in a spirit of gratitude*. In our English idiom we are accustomed to speak of that in which a man excels as a "gift," and of the talented man as a "gifted" man. And if anyone receives a gift, does he not feel grateful? To say, "I owe my success to nobody but myself," is as vain as it is stupid. "What hast thou that thou didst not receive? But if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?" (I Cor. 4:7).

The spirit of gratitude for what we are and what we have, and are pleased to be and have, is something altogether different from the worm-like self-depreciation which is sometimes regarded as the essence of humility. It is, of course, by no means easy to estimate ourselves truly, but the feeling of worthlessness is as harmful as it is false. It certainly should never have been confused with Christian humility, for this demands a sober judgment of one's gifts. To quote Paul again: "For I say, through the grace that was given me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but so to think as to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to each" (Rom. 12:3).

We are reminded that Jesus described himself as "meek and lowly," notwithstanding his incomparable preeminence. His ideal introduces us to the third and final aspect of humility. So, indeed, does a further passage from Paul, though it is the very passage which has led some to associate humility with self-depreciation. But it seems best understood as a rebuke to self-centeredness. "Doing nothing through faction or through vainglory, but in lowliness of mind each counting other better than himself; not looking each of you to his own things, but each of you also to the things of others" (Phil. 2:3-4). In a word: *Be altruistic*. Some, confusing humility with self-depreciation, have invented the paradox, "You cannot be humble and know it." If that were true, Jesus would be a liar.

The meekness and lowliness of Jesus is pictorially represented by John in his account of a symbolic gesture. On the evening before the crucifixion, Jesus girds himself with a towel and takes a basin of water and washes his disciples' feet, including the feet of Judas Iscariot. The gesture would lose all significance if both Jesus and his disciples had not recognized his masterliness. How different the act of the nameless woman of Galilee who washed the feet of Jesus with her penitential tears! The gesture of Jesus is performed by one who would dedicate his gifts to others. And what he performs is a menial task, one ordinarily performed by a slave. "He humbled himself, becoming obedient even unto death" (Phil. 2:8). His gifts he gave, without price. Whenever afterwards the early Christians referred to Jesus as an example, they had a similar dedication in mind. "Gird yourselves with humility," they said, "to serve one another" (I Pet. 5:5).

"By humbling himself he had his doom removed" (Acts 8:33, Moffatt). No wonder Augustine made humility the first article of religion, and Teresa made it the queen of the virtues. Perhaps they were thinking not so much of the lowliness of mind before a moral ideal, nor so much of the recognition that gifts are given, but rather more of the humility which finds in mutuality with the less endowed the essence of human dignity. Yet what we have taken as the third aspect may well be taken as but the practical aspect of the other two. Loving respect for the good of others and a feeling of gratitude for gifts of heart and mind and fortune, are but the inner spiritual preparation for the kind of social action which Christianity has called humility. To avert our doom, is there any alternative?

When the Chaplains Come Back

DONALD B. F. HOYT

We sometimes wonder what will happen to the men who are serving as chaplains in the armed forces when the war will have ended. We might rather wonder what is happening to the men themselves now; for their present experiences cannot but produce upon them a profound and life-long effect. What does it do to a man to be thrust suddenly from the usual parish ministry into a wholly male environment, where there are no women's societies, no church suppers, no annual bazaars? Well, we have heard one chaplain say, "For the first time in my life, I feel that I am truly a minister." While all the men might not take such a happy view of their war-time duties, it is certain that the chaplain has the opportunity of being preacher and pastor to a much greater extent than is afforded in most church positions.

This leads us to wonder what will happen to the churches which may become the charges of returned chaplains. We can only speculate, but it seems to us that such institutions may be in for a wholesome change of emphasis. If the man, back from the war, be seemingly reticent about his experiences, and sufficiently resilient to include families in his pastoral ministry; if he possess the required rugged mentality to take up again his private wrestling with philosophy and theology; and, if he retain enough of his lately exercised concentration upon religious fundamentals so as to inform his people that he is through with the side-show aspect of the parish ministry—that, under him, the church shall be the *church*; and, if enough churches get such ministers, it may well be that we shall see a mighty resurgence of church vitality in this land. We must, however, wait to see what becomes of that big "if."

Book Reviews

THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF A GREAT LIBERAL

This delightfully written book will be as welcome to Dr. Jacks's "American Friends" as to his English.¹ It is appropriate that one of his earliest recollections should be of his father bursting into the nursery one day in 1865 and exclaiming, "My God, they've shot the President!" He learned more from Royce than from any of his English teachers, even Martineau, and it was at a moonlight picnic near Harvard College that there began the romance which led to his marriage to a daughter of Stopford Brooke.

Although great men flit through the pages—Gladstone, Balfour, Woodrow Wilson, John Buchan, this is not what gives the book its fascination. It is indeed a confession, a personal record. The writer's father, a charming and imaginative man, was not a success as a shopkeeper, and it was his heroic mother who kept the family going. The son felt obliged to give up his prospects of Cambridge and earn his living as early as possible. It was only by desperately hard work in his leisure from teaching that he eventually earned a degree from that "mother of orphans," London University. Later he came to trace in early hardships the hand of Matthew Arnold's "Power that makes for righteousness." Indeed, he sees in the dislike for private school teaching which largely drove him to the ministry a modern equivalent to the prophetic "call" which was supposed to be the experience of candidates for the ministry.

After a happy year as Hibbert Scholar at Harvard, there followed a short curacy to Stopford Brooke in London, and then two important pulpits, one at Liverpool and the other at Birmingham. He almost suggests that he left the former because sermon-writing was so laborious, the latter because it had become too facile. Moreover, he needed more time for his work as first editor of the Hibbert Journal, and was glad to accept an appointment on the staff of Manchester College.

He saw his task, in the phrase of his predecessor at Liverpool, as "completing the Reformation," and especially enabling men to get "a first-hand knowledge of God." This subjective approach led him in later years to identify religion with the soul's awakening in general. He was thus out of touch with those who laid the emphasis on public worship and the institution of the church, and this led to difficulties when he became Principal of what was in fact, though not perhaps in theory, a school for training Unitarian ministers. His difficulties were probably due more to the logic of facts than to the narrow-minded denominationalism of the College Trustees.

Perhaps Dr. Jacks did not quite realize that the Reformation is still a long way from completion, and is a historical process in which tradition and institutions have their part to play. But no one can doubt that he has himself left his mark on history by his work, and above all in his brilliant editing of the Hibbert Journal, to which, as he says with justifiable pride, "there are

¹THE CONFESSION OF AN OCTOGENARIAN. By L. P. Jacks. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1942. 272 pp. \$3.50.

few thinkers of eminence in the province of religion, theology and philosophy, belonging to this period in the English-speaking world, whose names will not be found among the contributors."

Manchester College,
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L. A. GARRARD.

A CHASTENED PROTESTANTISM

If a young Calvinist professor is right, in his book¹ aptly sub-titled "A study in chastened Protestantism," then many of us religious liberals are execrably wrong. In order that my colleagues who read *THE JOURNAL* may see the extent to which the author's contentions diametrically oppose commonly accepted "liberal" teachings, I shall list some of his propositions. Let the reader be prepared for disagreement!

(a) The humanistic aspect of Protestant thought, with its essential doctrines of the supreme worth of men and of human ideals (p. 3), its insinuation that we do not *need* God (p. 150), its minimizing of the sense of tragedy and its belief in a God whose chief concern is man's happiness (p. 73); its half-hearted return to the Roman Catholic doctrine of faith in man and in the works of man (p. 21, 167)—these mark a renegade Protestantism which has lost its soul.

(b) "Good works," the "practical way" of salvation, belief in "love," and the like, are worse than nothing (p. 27), because they put multitudes of sinners into a state of coma, wherein they too easily achieve absolution. Man stupidly tries to make himself into God by peeling off human garments.

(c) "The height of a religion is not to be measured even by the excellence of its morals" (p. 55), but by the fact that man knows that he is less than God. "The repudiation of anthropocentrism is a primary trait of the contemporary mind" (p. 43). (Will our humanists affirm the precise opposite?)

(d) The kernel of Haroutunian's thesis is that despair is a firmer ground for life-hope, than is liberal optimism! Liberals have a simple-minded prejudice that faith, hope, and love are induced by persistent assertion of them in eloquent moralistic harangue (p. 59). "BE hopeful!" On the contrary, says Haroutunian, the key to profound living, peace, and joy, comes from a curious alchemy: facing the struggle of sin and death, man undergoes a conversion that turns his attention outside of himself. "The perception of our common misery in our inherited and communicated disease of sin and in frustrating death, co-operating with our faith and hope in Christ Jesus, is the true origin of a lively struggle against self-centredness and the censoriousness and cruelty which accompany it" (p. 76). This is the author's paradoxical basis for a social ethic. "The repudiation of the doctrine of Original Sin in favor of the doctrine of 'free will' has minimized men's perception of the tragedy of life which is immeasurably

¹WISDOM AND FOLLY IN RELIGION. By Joseph Haroutunian. New York: Scribner's, 1940. 173 pp. \$2.00.

superior to the sense of responsibility, as a foundation for charity among men" (p. 79).

(e) Because it minimizes the self's concern with time and eternity, and the problem of sin-death which issues from it, the "scientific" study of man, reducing all to physico-chemical relations, is inadequate (p. 68).

(f) "Protestant preaching in our day has suffered greatly by presenting the Bible as the *magna charta* of optimism" p. 150). Tragedy is the keynote of both Old and New Testaments.

If the above blunt denials of recent liberal doctrine irritate, there are other portions of the book to which liberals as I know them would give hearty assent. In the author's arraignment of "Justification by Faith," as opposed to "Justification by God," in which the former has its efficacy as a kind of magically induced "feeling" (p. 13). In his condemnation of "worship" used as a deliberate "technique" of inducing a feeling (p. 27). In his understanding of such atheism of despair as is found in the closing paragraph of Bertrand Russell's famous "A Free Man's Worship" (p. 35). In his insistence that contemporary Protestantism must identify itself with the people, sharing their pessimism and cynicism (p. 37). Your reviewer believes that the author points to what our liberal churches might be doing, when he urges that ". . . Protestant thought should cultivate more discernment and quiet, humble wisdom in its treatment of contemporary sin and evil" (p. 166).

The author of the foregoing volume acknowledges his debt to his teacher, who in another current book¹ applies his tension theology to the political and social indecisions of our day. That the absolute ethic of love as found in the gospels cannot be made the immediate, simple alternative to the injustices of our time, is the theme of the book, whose opening essay, "Why the Church Is Not Pacifist," is the best statement of the non-pacifist Christian's position yet to come to the attention of this reviewer. Too many liberals fall back upon the secular rationale, in these times.

A diatribe against the easy optimism of our time in the face of man's diabolical will-to-power, the book unmasks current secularism as an insidious betrayal, often given a respectable front by pale forms of religion. The book is especially important to Unitarians because it prints Niebuhr's Ware Lecture, "Optimism, Pessimism, and Religious Faith." By many, Niebuhr's book will be judged more important than that of his pupil. Both are vital.

Both authors explicitly attack basic ideas expressed in the current sermons, utterances, and writings of Universalists and Unitarians. Let no one attempt a counter-attack without having read the two books! The reviewer is not ready to refute! He prefers to ponder. Somehow, the words of Haroutunian and Niebuhr sound ominously true.

Third Congregational Society of
Greenfield, Massachusetts

EDWARD W. OHRENSTEIN

¹CHRISTIANITY AND POWER POLITICS. By Reinhold Niebuhr. New York: Scribner's, 1940. 226 pp. \$2.00.

LAND OF THE MORNING

*The Philippines Calling*¹ is a volume published in the nick of time. What might have been a book chiefly interesting to religious liberals, came from the press just when all Americans were excited about our Far-Eastern possessions. For general readers, who seek to be introduced to the subject, and for the better informed, who will find here facts about religious developments in the archipelago not otherwise available, this book is indispensable. The author, Doctor Cornish, has had unusual opportunities to know his subject. As President of the American Unitarian Association he made the first outside church contact with the Independent Church of the Philippines, separated from Rome after the withdrawal of the Spanish colonial government, and was instrumental in bringing Archbishop Aglipay to the United States in 1931. In consequence of this visit the Independent Church became a member of the International Congress for Liberal Christianity and Religious Freedom. As President of the Congress Doctor Cornish visited the islands in 1941-42, journeying from the northern tip of Luzon to the end of Mindanao, a distance of some four thousand miles, by boat and motor car.

The book begins with four or five historical chapters, admirable background for the general reader. Following chapters are devoted to the Independent Church. The concluding half of the book consists of a readable and informing account of the author's journeyings, and observations on the characteristics of the people and their future. Doctor Cornish's church connections gave him opportunities afforded few visitors; he was welcomed in distant towns and villages, and met local leaders, in a way impossible to the tourist, and perhaps even to the government official. He is convinced that when the Philippines are freed from Japan, their permanent association with the United States will make both for their well-being and ours, and that this from the Filipino point of view is both desired and desirable.

The section of the book dealing with the Independent Church furnishes facts nowhere else available. Its remarkable statement of faith, showing the influence of Nineteenth Century modernism in the Roman Catholic Church, is here set forth in full. Selections from its liturgy disclose the same influence. The history, organization and constituency of the church are described. There are sketches of Jose Rizal, prophet, reformer, intellectual leader and martyr of the new church; of Gregorio Aglipay, Roman Catholic priest, general in Aguinaldo's army, and finally first Archbishop of the church; and others prominent in the movement. Americans may well be proud of this fact: A general in the insurrection against the authority of the United States, who once bore a price on his head, could be made the honored leader of a free church in a land under our administration. Those who fear for the soundness of our democracy may well take courage from this, as indeed from our whole record in the Philippines.

The title of this review is from a poem by José Palma on the Philippines.

The Meadville Theological School,
Chicago, Illinois

Sydney B. Snow.

¹THE PHILIPPINES CALLING. By Louis C. Cornish. Philadelphia: Dorrance and Co., 1942. 313 pp. \$2.00.

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